

Message Text

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43

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FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9173

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 3361

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, YE

SUBJECT: UNLIKELIHOOD OF FURTHER CABINET CHANGES

REF: SANA 2991

1. FOREIGN MINISTER AL-ASNAJ TOLD ME DURING SEPTEMBER 21, CALL THAT AS OF NOW NO FURTHER CABINET CHANGES ARE ENVISAGED, CERTAINLY "NO MAJOR ONES" DESPITE STORIES TO THE CONTRARY NOW CIRCULATING THE SOUK DURING USUAL RAMADAN RUMOR-MONGERING. (IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING, PRIME MINISTER ALSO CONFIRMED ABOVE IN EVEN STRONGER TERMS.) AL-ASNAJ COMMENTED THAT PRESENT TEAM UNDER LEADERSHIP OF TECHNOCRAT PRIME MINISTER ABD AL-AZIZ ABD AL-GHANI HAS GIVEN YEMEN ITS LONGEST PERIOD OF POLITICAL STABILITY SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC IN 1962, THUS ENABLING YEMEN'S CURRENT ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL BOOM TO MOVE FORWARD. AL-ASNAJ SAID IN THIS REGARD, HOWEVER, THAT ABD AL-GHANI COULD BE AND SHOULD BE A MORE FORCEFUL PRIME MINISTER, GIVEN PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI'S DESIRE TO STAY OUT OF THE RUNNING OF THE DAY-TO-DAY GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. AL-ASNAJ CONCLUDED THAT EVEN DESPITE ABD AL-GHANI'S LACK OF FORCEFULNESS HE IS STILL THE BEST MAN FOR THE JOB AT THIS TIME AND THE OTHERS IN THE CABINET SUPPORT HIM FULLY AS DOES THE PRESIDENT.

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2. COMMENT. AL-ASNAJ'S COMMENTS ARE PRETTY MUCH ON THE MARK ABOUT ABD AL-DHANI, WHO IS AN HONORABLE AND COMPETENT MAN LACKING POLITICAL PRETENSIONS BUT A FORCEFUL PERSONALITY AS WELL. NONETHELESS, HE IS THE RIGHT MAN FOR YEMEN AT THE PRESENT TIME AND WE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT AL-HAMDI ALSO APPRECIATES THIS FACT AND WILL KEEP ABD AL-GHANI AND THE REST OF HIS "TECHNOCRATIC TEAM TOGETHER FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE IN ORDER TO ENABLE YEMEN TO CONTINUE THE REMARKABLE ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESS OF THE THE LAST TWO YEARS. FINALLY, WHILE ASNAJ AND THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD BE IN POSITION TO KNOW ABMUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CABINET CHANGES, HAMDI HAS MADE THEM IN THE PAST WITHOUT ANY FOREWARNING OR PRIOR CONSULTATION AND HE COULD DO SO AGAIN IF HE BELIEVES HE MUST TAKE A NEW POLITICAL TACK IN ORDER TO SURVIVE. THUS FAR, NOTHING WOULD INDICATE THE NEED FOR ANY SUCH NEW VEERING BUT IN YEMEN'S LABYRINTHINE POLITICAL SCENE, SUCH MOVES OFTEN BECOME NECESSARY.

SCOTES

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